

Ex-Detective Throws Book At Polygamy
Salt Lake Tribune 24Mar00 A5
By Greg Burton: Salt Lake Tribune

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH -- John R. Llewellyn, a retired sheriff's detective, father and storyteller, has written, "Murder of a Prophet: The Dark Side of Utah Polygamy." This fictionalized drama of doomsday polygamists has angered some of the region's polygamists. Leaders in Colorado City, Arizona and Hildale, Utah, areas where a large tenet of plural marriages prevail, are banning the book.

The story is a chronicle of a violent plot to unite all polygamists and topple the Mormon Church. It has drawn praise for its true-to-life-portrayal of the social fabric of Utah's religious subculture. Llewellyn has drawn on his 66-year-old life experience brimming with the miscellany of crime and impropriety in Utah. He is the character in many of the tales he tells, stories he has drawn on from his days as a sheriff's detective and some on his own life's experience.

Before retiring from the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office in 1982, Llewellyn was a Mormon convert living a secret plural life with two women. Eventually, he was excommunicated from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "I retired to save the sheriff's office and my family the emarrassment," he says today. "I'm at a point now where testosterone is not running through my body. Back then, though, to have more than one woman want to be married to you, that was a heck of an ego builder."

Llewellyn was a county gumshoe for 28 years, assigned to Utah's first unit for sex crimes investigations. It was called the "Morals Squad," when the unit began fielding calls about Utah's polygamists in the 1970's. In 1976, Llewellyn began compiling a profile of Ervil Morel LeBaron, a radical polygamist. He had a cult called, The Church of the First Born of the Lamb of God. A year later, LeBaron ordered the murder of rival polygamist Rulon Allred of Murray in a plot that targeted the leaders of the Kingston clan.

During this time, Llewellyn was not a polygamist and not a very devout Mormon. "I was a bohemian, and a damn good one, just like most cops," he said. "But along the way I became infatuated with the polygamist lifestyle."

Today, Llewellyn is the father of 13 children and says he has a platonic relationship with two women. He is a friend to many of Utah's independent polygamous families and a foe to most of the state's organized groups. He is also working as an investigator in lawsuits against the Apostolic United Brethren and the The True and Living Church in Manti.

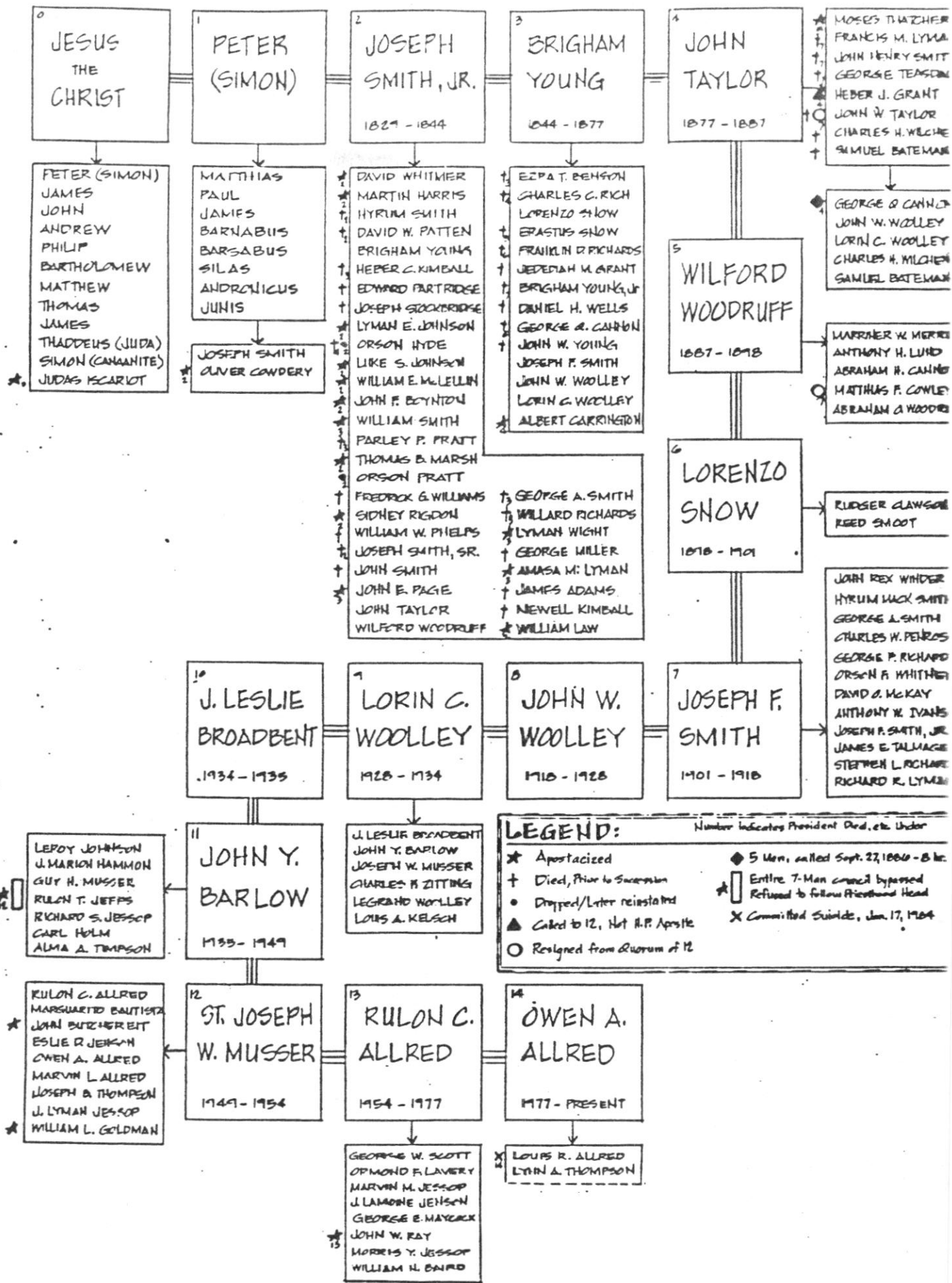
"These polygamist cults have every angle for a good writer....conflict, crime, subterfuge," Llewellyn said. "And while I have many friends who are polygamists, this book might be a warning to other people from going into polygamy. I would tell my own children not to, but they may anyway."

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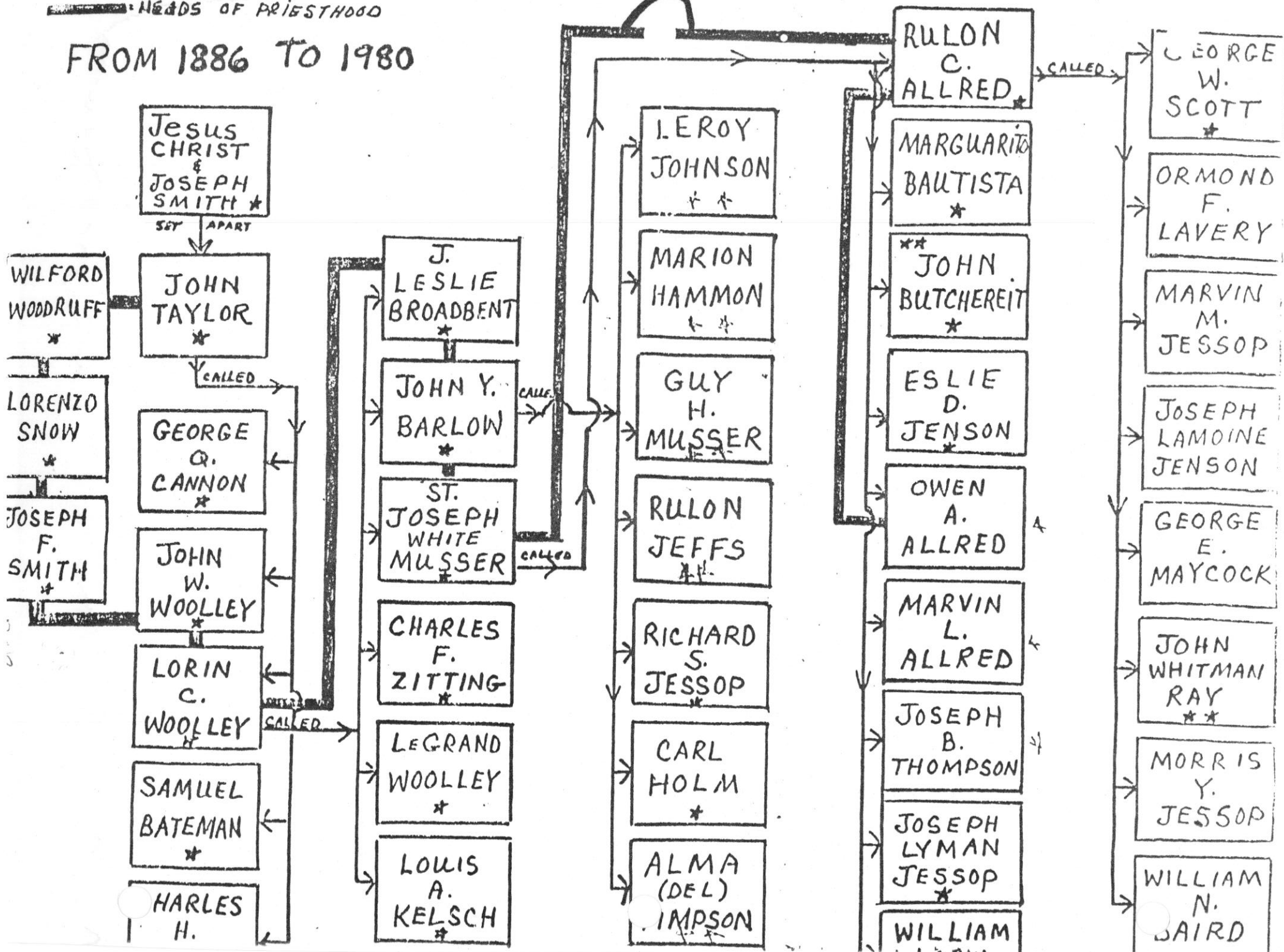
ALLRED STATISTICS

Year	^{CONFIRM} Baptisms	Marriages	Endowments	2nd End
1935	1			
1938	1			
1940	1			
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1946	2		4	
1948	3			
1950	1			
1951	1		2	
1952	10	2		
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1955	5			
1956	2	1		
1957	1	2		
1958	10			
1959	5	8		
1960	3			
1961	4	2		
1962	5	4		
1963	11	6		
1964	9	4		
1965	28	4		
1966	21	2		
1967	53	23		
1968	40	8		
1969	107	36		
1970	147	54		
1971	125	52		
1972	68	46		
1973	38	33		
1974	73	20		
1975	69	20		
1976	59	13		
1977	63	6		
1978	44	7		
1979	103	34		
1980	64	24		
1981	100	22	61	
1982	76	12	83	
1983	96	49	210	
1984	84	48	143	11
1985	125	140	155	4
1986	125	152	136	
1987	93	53	46	
1988	122	115	93	13
1989	76	80	61	
1990	97	106	84	
1991	100	72	56	

1992	102	109	75	17
1993	71	98	75	23
1994	49	58	43	
1995	8	19	5	



FROM 1886 TO 1980



Dennis Matthews, 16 of his 23 children and his wives: in back from left, Christine, Valerie, Kathleen, Sandy and Connie.

Utah Polygamists Sealed to Life of Hiding And Sharing — Homes, Wives, Attention

By David Clifton

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Dennis Matthews lives in an enormous Utah County house with five wives and 18 of their 23 children. Each wife has her own room, and Mr. Matthews shares affections with all on a rotating basis.

Mr. Matthews, who started his polygamous family nine years ago, says the most difficult aspect of polygamy is introducing a new wife — and occasionally her children — to the family. It takes time for everyone to get used to her personality and needs.

Yet 29-year-old Connie, Mr. Matthews' fourth wife who moved to Utah from Minnesota, says she has seen her husband "grow when he's courting someone or marrying someone. He changes each time he takes a new wife. Each bring out different personality traits that maybe I couldn't."

A 48-year-old fireworks salesman, Mr. Matthews provides the sole financial support for the ever-expanding family. Wives Sandy, Christine, Kathleen, Connie and Valerie sew clothes for themselves and the children, tend the garden, take care of the kids and maintain the Mapleton home that has the perpetual feel of a family reunion.

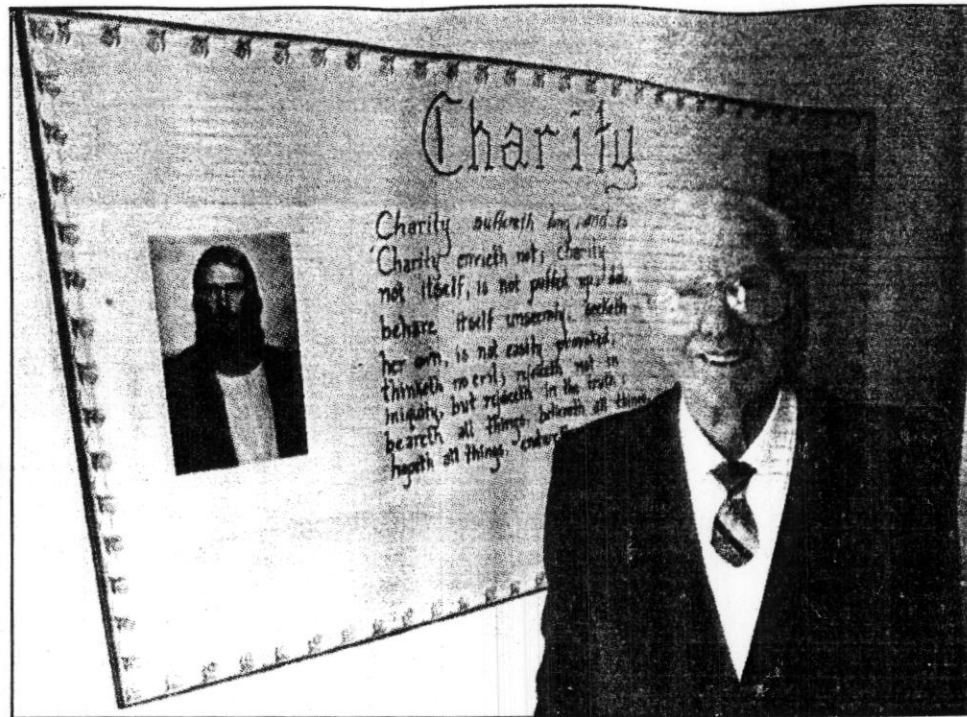
"I don't believe in all that women's lib stuff," says 21-year-old Valerie, who, like the other wives, wears simple long-sleeved cotton dresses. "A woman's place is in the home raising good children."

Adds Mr. Matthews: "I like to have my wives and children in the same house. I like to hug and kiss each one of them every day."

Gary, a polygamist who lives in Bountiful, says he would like to do the same. But fear of persecution forced him to rent two homes for his two wives and seven children. And besides, the salesman acknowledged, having both wives in one house caused problems.

"If one wife wanted to watch television with me, the other would have to go hide in her bedroom," says Gary, who asked that his last name not be used. "If I wanted to go to bed early with one wife, it made it uncomfortable for the other."

So Gary is searching for two homes "within 100 yards of each other." That, he



Jeff Allred/The Salt Lake Tribune

Owen Allred's Apostolic United Brethren church in Bluffdale draws 500.

reasons, will bring everyone together again.

These two families help paint a picture of modern-day polygamy. Ogden Kraut, a polygamist author, estimates there are 30,000 or more practicing polygamists in the West. And Mormon historian and polygamist Fred Collier says there are more polygamists today than there were in the middle 1800s — when plural marriages were legal.

Colorado City, Ariz., and Hildale, Utah, claim the largest concentration of polygamists in the United States. Rulon Jeffs leads 4,000 people in this isolated, tight-knit community where outsiders are viewed with suspicion.

There are an estimated 10,000 polygamists in Utah, and leaders of the fundamentalist sect say their numbers are growing statewide. Some have attached themselves to Alex Joseph at his Big Water settlement outside Kanab. Tom Greene, who has appeared on "Donahue," has a compound of polygamous

houses in Sandy. The Kingston family in Bountiful counts more than 100 people among its ranks.

Other pockets of polygamy are located in Salt Lake City, Sugar House, Lehi, Santaquin, Delta, Cedar City, Murray, Mapleton, Provo, West Valley City, St. George and Bluffdale.

Owen Allred, 78, leads the largest polygamist community on the Wasatch Front: The Apostolic United Brethren, based in Bluffdale, which claims thousands of members from Mexico to Montana. More than 500 polygamists gather for services every Sunday at Allred's concrete, warehouse-like church near the Utah Veterans Memorial Park.

Bluffdale Mayor Lee Wanlass estimates that up to 10 percent of his 2,500-resident city is polygamist. He describes them as "good neighbors."

Mr. Allred, regarded as a "prophet," is the brother of slain polygamist leader Rulon Allred, who was gunned down at his

See A-13, Column 1

The laser is proving its worth in incision. And, a bit of discomfort, but no time and colon, a 30-minute procedure. The same goes for the intestine. The laser is proving its worth in incision.

Some uses for the laser: Military. Guides smart.

Almost against the will of the management at Hughes Research

Utah Polygamists Are Sealed to A Life of Sharing

■ Continued From A-1

Murray doctor's office in 1977 by members of Ervil LeBaron's rival polygamist clan. Owen Allred's word is law for followers such as the Matthews family.

"We are growing very fast," says Mr. Allred, a farmer with piercing eyes and big, strong hands. "We get two to three new families every month. We have a new chapel being built in Santaquin, and we're tripling the size of our chapel in Cedar City."

According to property tax records, the Apostolic United Brethren, with Mr. Allred as trustee, owns nearly \$1.4 million in property and buildings in Salt Lake County. The church and a corresponding company, Unified Industries, also own land in Pinesdale, Mont., Arizona, Mexico and other areas in Utah.

The land and houses in Mr. Allred's residential compound in Bluffdale are worth more than \$283,000. Church property near the Utah Veterans Memorial Park is valued at nearly \$1 million.

Many of the church's followers do not share in this apparent wealth.

Mr. Matthews, for instance, owes the state more than \$4,000 in tax payments, interest and penalties. According to Utah County tax records, he has not paid any property tax on his land, owned under his wife Christine's name, since 1988.

Mr. Matthews says he's aware of the back taxes and pledges to pay them this year.

"Our congregation is poor," says Mr. Allred, who has at least five wives but wouldn't say how many. "Members give tithing to the church when they can, which pays for any of the church's bills. Our children do fund-raisers and we hold a dance twice a month and ask people to feed the kitty. But that usually pays for setting up tables at the dance."

Close ties to their pioneer roots and conservative clothing creates the perception that polygamists are backward and lack modern goods and technology. Yet most polygamist families live in large, expensive homes. Mini vans, bicycles and wagons clog their driveways.

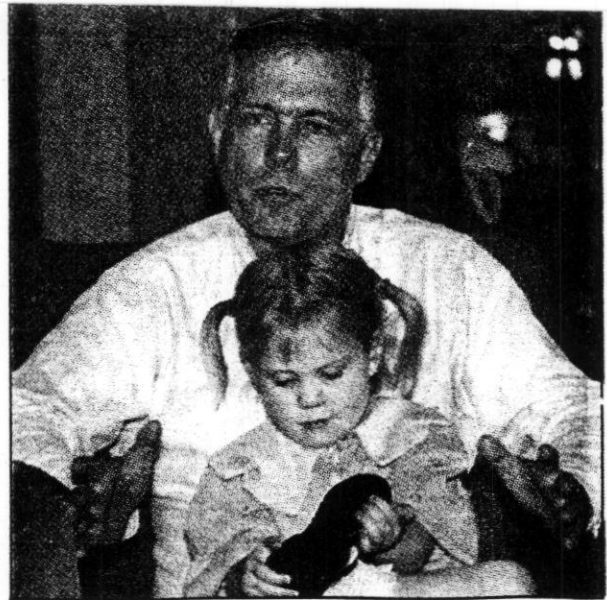
Polygamist men hold a variety of blue- and white-collar jobs, from lawyers and bankers to plumbers and construction workers, says Mr. Allred. Nearly half of the women in his clan also hold a wide range of jobs.

While polygamists such as Mr. Matthews view their leaders as prophets, Gary and other so-called independents refuse to follow any man. Some independents follow the same tenets as Mr. Allred's clan and they readily accept the notion that some polygamists have had direct contact with God. However, that contact does not automatically make these "prophets" supreme rulers over their followers.

"I have had friends who have received revelations from God," Gary says. "But none of them have said, because of their revelation, that they are the prophet of the holy word. No one should be a head honcho."

Although independents and prophet-led polygamists disagree on leadership, they all insist they're following the teachings of Joseph Smith, founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And they contend they're not pushing anti-government militancy and leading perverted sex lives — as often perceived by the public.

Polygamists believe that contemporary Latter-day Saints, who oppose plural marriages, have turned their backs on the word of God. They maintain that



Jeff Allred/The Salt Lake Tribune

Polygamist Dennis Matthews sits with his daughter Mary, one of 18 children that live at home.

amists say.

"We were living in a rented home in Salt Lake City and the local LDS bishop contacted our landlady and told her we were polygamists," Gary claims. "The landlady said it was no problem, but the bishop said he wanted to protect the neighborhood from my influence."

Mr. Allred claims the LDS Church sends spies into his congregation to seek out contemporary Mormons practicing polygamy so they can excommunicate them. He also contends that employers discriminate against polygamists, particularly women, and that they have no protection under civil rights statutes because plural marriages are illegal.

Mr. Matthews, who sells fireworks at shopping centers throughout the West, expects to lose the right to set up stands at some centers after his story appears in *The Tribune*.

Polygamists have faced persecution since Joseph Smith introduced plural marriage to the LDS Church in 1843. Those who continued polygamy after the Manifesto of 1890 were persecuted and prosecuted by civil and church authorities. The last large-scale attack on polygamy occurred in 1953, when police arrested 300 polygamist men and women at Short Creek on the Utah/Arizona border.

Dennis Matthews' five wives, who wear long hair in braids or pulled back in a bun, rotate their cooking and cleaning duties much the way they share nights with their husband. Each takes a turn.

"We don't practice the Queen Bee doctrine, where the wife who has been married to me longest gets the best treatment," Mr. Matthews says. "It would mean the death of me to pick a favorite among them."

Connie says the five women enjoy working and living together in a big house. And while they don't spend as much time with their husband as do women in monogamous marriages, time alone with Mr. Matthews is of high quality.

"He's romantic," Connie says. "He sends us flowers and cards. And he takes us out individually quite often."

Sandy, Mr. Matthews' first plural wife, says there is little squabbling over dates, who makes cornmeal mush for breakfast, who cleans the bathrooms or who feeds the babies. In fact, one of the advantages of plural marriages is that several women breast feed infants simultaneously, and if one woman has an errand to run her sister wife is able to nurse her baby.

"There is a give and take," Sandy adds.

Mr. Matthews, a quiet, articulate man who wears

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perceived by the public.

Polygamists believe that contemporary Latter-day Saints, who oppose plural marriages, have turned their backs on the word of God. They maintain that Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith, who was killed in 1844, appeared to Mormon Church President John Taylor in 1886 and commanded him never to abandon polygamy.

The revelation allegedly occurred in a house that's now a state exhibit at Pioneer Trails State Park in Salt Lake City. Mr. Taylor, who reportedly glowed with light and rose a foot off the ground when telling witnesses of the celestial visit, recorded the manifestation in a handwritten note, polygamists say.

But LDS leaders — under federal pressure to end polygamy or forget about obtaining statehood — buried the memo in 1890 when President Wilford Woodruff issued the "Manifesto" instructing church members to stop practicing plural marriages, polygamists maintain.

"The only real difference is polygamists continued to follow celestial marriage as it was handed down to Joseph Smith by God," Mr. Allred says.

"They (LDS leaders) have altered their belief to appease the people of the world and the Latter-day Saints themselves," he adds. "We believe to change anything given to Joseph Smith by Jesus Christ is wrong. To change anything is to say Jesus Christ was wrong."

LDS leaders say it's the polygamists who are wrong. In response to written questions from *The Salt Lake Tribune*, church leaders stressed that any changes to Mormon doctrine — including the end of polygamy — were commanded by God. Polygamists, therefore, are living "out of harmony" with the true doctrine of the church.

Don LeFevre, church spokesman, insists church archives contain no memo from former president Taylor suggesting that Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith instructed him to continue practicing polygamy. Nor do the archives contain "any evidence justifying a belief that any such revelation was ever given," church leaders say.

Mormons who become polygamous are excommunicated and cannot be married in any LDS Temple. Connie Matthews — who left the Methodist Church to become a

Mormon and even filled an LDS mission — says she misses the LDS Church "because it nurtured me and taught me."

Still, she's convinced that becoming a plural wife is the right thing to do, adding, "I'll take my chances with God."

Polygamy is illegal in Utah. But statutes prohibiting plural marriages are rarely enforced because most polygamists are not officially married to each of their wives, says Salt Lake County Attorney David Yocom. Husband and wives are "sealed" to each other in religious ceremonies performed by a polygamist elder.

"Besides, who is going to go out and look for these people?" he asks. "It just doesn't happen."

Adds Salt Lake County Sheriff's Capt. Earl Waltrous:

"I have been in Bluffdale for six months, but if you asked me where any polygamist lived, I couldn't tell you. They are law-abiding citizens and we never have any problems with them."

Modern-day polygamists may not have much trouble with the law, but they claim the persecution that haunted their Mormon ancestors in the 1800s thrives today. Much of it comes from the LDS Church, poly-

infants simultaneously, and if one woman has an infant to run her sister wife is able to nurse her baby.

"There is a give and take," Sandy adds.

Mr. Matthews, a quiet, articulate man who wears simple clothes himself, generally settles problems by asking the upset woman to work out things with her "sister," or by issuing a firm ruling. "By letting them solve their own problems, they learn to interact with each other," Mr. Matthews says. "Things get resolved pretty fast around here."

Gary uses a stronger hand in running his two households. His word, the Bountiful salesman says, is law to his two wives and seven children.

"My wives have challenged me over different things, and in each case I have put my foot down so firmly they realized what the bounds are and not to challenge me anymore," Gary says.

Money — or lack thereof — is often the biggest challenge facing polygamists. Mr. Matthews acknowledges that it's difficult to house, clothe and feed 24 people on \$50,000 a year. But he boasts about not being on welfare or taking food stamps.

"Because I am doing what the Lord wants me to do, He takes care of me."

Yet his family is not covered by health insurance. "We've been lucky so far. Other than the occasional cut that requires stitches, no one has been seriously hurt."

Like many polygamous families, the Matthews save money on groceries by eating little meat. A half-acre garden behind the house provides vegetables; the wives put up more than 1,000 jars of tomatoes, beets and carrots last year.

The Matthews women also bake three to four loaves of bread each day, and family members scour area orchards for old fruit, which is made into juice or canned.

Sandy teaches 13 of the 18 Matthews children at home; the remaining five attend public schools. The home curriculum is approved by the Nebo School District and the children are routinely tested to determine how they compare to public school students.

Connie and Christine assist a teacher who comes to the home twice a week to teach preschool classes.

And nearby Landmark High School has a program designed to help families that teach children at home; the Matthews are permitted to use the computer room at no cost.

Mr. Matthews often works at home. And after each meal, family members gather in their large living room. "We all kneel facing the direction of the [LDS] temple in Salt Lake City and pray."

While all children participate in the daily routine, not all are sold on plural marriages.

"Polygamy is demeaning to women," says Shelley, a 21-year-old daughter from Mr. Matthews' first marriage. Cooking and cleaning for a man is not a modern way of life, says Shelley, a student at Southern Utah University.

Fifteen-year-old Adam says he does not believe the religious doctrine that accompanies polygamy but says his views could change. "My preference is to have one wife. But my dad didn't decide to become a polygamist until later in life. I could be the same way."

Ten-year-old Beth is a believer. "I want to be 21 when I become a polygamist wife — but not before I go to college and work in computers."

Reporter Peggy Stack contributed to this report.

Bonnie Barber, left, is principal of Mountain Valley, a polygamous school daughter Elaine attends.

Reading, 'Riting and Religion: Moms Teach Pupils at Mountain Valley

By David Clifton
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

BLUFFDALE — The mothers of students at Mountain Valley School don't worry about what their children are being taught. They do the teaching.

About 150 children of polygamists attend the school for shelter from the drugs, sex and violence their parents believe accompany public education.

The school is run by the Apostolic United Brethren. It teaches biology, social studies, math and homemaking classes, much as its public school counterparts.

But the classes are taught by 30 volunteer mothers, not certified teachers. Children do much of their schoolwork at home under the supervision of parents, said Principal Bonnie Barber.

"The concept here is to have the mothers learn to teach their own children," said Mrs. Barber, who has three children at the school. "If a mother teaches at the school, her children get discounted tuition."

Mountain Valley also admits children from non-polygamist families. But Mrs. Barber would not say how much tuition costs "because we don't want a rush of people coming out here for the low rates."

The school teaches religion, but not polygamy, said Mrs. Barber. "There is no encouragement from us for the children to participate in plural marriage," she said. "We give the children a basic foundation in the scriptures."

Kathy McCurdy has worked at Mountain Valley for 10 years. Un-

like public schools, Mountain Valley's small class sizes — six to 20 — allow her to spend more time with each child.

"We can better monitor their progress," Mrs. McCurdy said.

Elaine Barber, Mrs. Barber's 15-year-old daughter, has been attending Mountain Valley since she was a toddler. Though she enjoys the closeness developed with fellow students, the sophomore said she would like to attend public school "to see what it is like."

Most of Mountain Valley's students eventually attend public school, Mrs. Barber, contending that they're better prepared than their peers.

"Students will come back after public high school and tell us they kept waiting for English classes to be hard," she said.

Polygamous Community Faces 21st Century

ARIZONA REPUBLIC

COLORADO CITY, Ariz. — This polygamous fortress has withstood the scorn of a hostile America.

But now the community, rooted to a 19th century way of life, faces a challenge: the 21st century.

The approximately 4,000 people who live here and in Hildale, Utah, make up the largest gathering of polygamists in the United States.

Television has entered many Colorado City and Hildale homes, although not MTV.

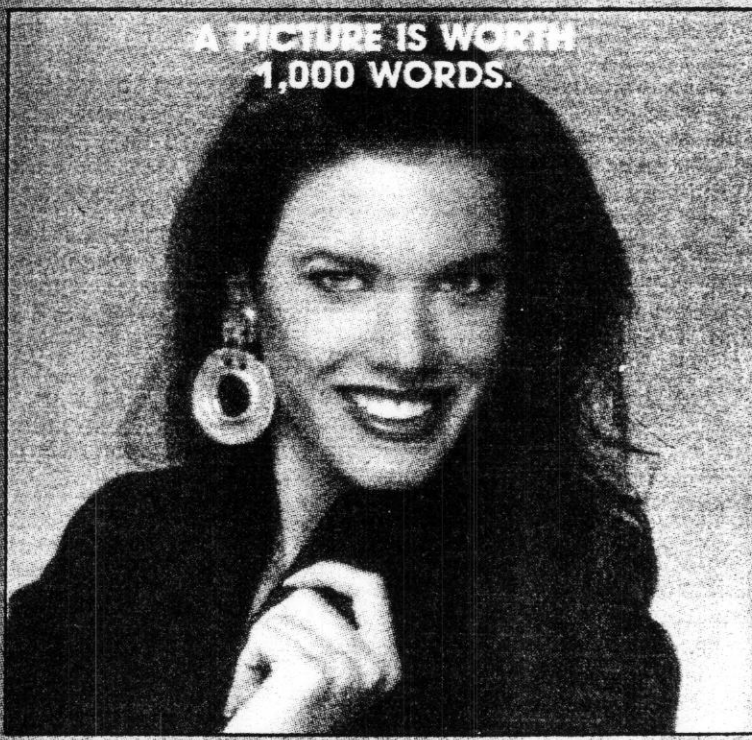
Scores of ranch-style homes are being built for those maturing out of the town's baby boom.

A million-dollar airport links Colorado City with the Mohave County seat of Kingman. And the first buildings of a polygamist university are being erected.

But women and girls will continue to wear long skirts and be dutiful wives. Men will continue to be firm-handed patriarchs to their individual clans of wives and children.

"We are basically conservative," said Dan Barlow, Colorado City's mayor. "We hold to old-fashioned values. We believe in very strong families and very strict morals."

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Enduring Poverty of Plural Marriage

By David Clifton
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Colleen entered plural marriage at age 16 for the wholesome, godly lifestyle her polygamist husband promised her.

At 34, she is divorced, unemployed and living on welfare with six children — four sired by a polygamist and two others fathered by different men.

Jan was barely 16 when she learned of her pending marriage to the son of a prominent Utah polygamist leader. Now divorced, she lives out of state with her seven children, fearing retribution from her former polygamist family members.

Jan and Colleen, who asked that their real names not be used, said being one of several wives isn't as blissful as polygamist leaders make it out to be. The women

claimed polygamist women are forced to scavenge meals out of garbage cans, live in scantily furnished homes and endure constant physical and emotional abuse.

"My husband became violent in the last five years of our marriage after he took his third wife," said Jan. "To appease his new wife, he felt like he had to beat me."

Some of the men in Owen Allred's Bluffdale-based clan would court women with young daughters just so they could marry the girls, Colleen claimed. And some of the children brought into polygamous families suffered sexual abuse by their new fathers.

Jan and Colleen claimed that to counter the poverty of plural marriage, polygamist leaders like Mr. Allred encouraged women to apply for welfare and food stamps. They said polygamous women

sidestepped welfare fraud laws simply by telling case workers they are single parents who live alone.

Mr. Allred said Apostolic United Brethren members are discouraged from applying for welfare. If a family encounters financial problems, the rest of his congregation provides clothes, food and money, he said.

State welfare officials said they've uncovered few cases of welfare fraud among polygamists. However, state officials acknowledged that they rarely go into polygamist homes to determine if more than one woman is on welfare.

Being a polygamist has no bearing on receiving welfare payments, said Cindy Haig, director of family support. "If she meets all income, asset and support requirements, she qualifies."

Radical Fundamentalists Give Peaceful Polygamists a Bad Name

Most polygamists are quiet, reserved and follow the laws — except for laws against plural marriage.

But they fight a stigma created by violent or bizarre fundamentalists who make national headlines every several years. Among those incidents:

- On January 28, 1988, a siege in Marion, Utah, led by polygamist Addam Swapp ended in a hail of gunfire. Utah Corrections Lt. Fred House was killed by Swapp's brother-in-law.

- Six months later, four people were gunned down in Texas, apparent victims of polygamist leader Ervil LeBaron's followers. LeBaron, who died in prison in 1981, vowed those that opposed him would perish.

Police believe as many as 20 people on a so-called LeBaron hit list have been murdered. Most cases are unsolved.

- Seven Ogden polygamists, led by Arvin Shreeve, were charged in August 1991 with sexually abusing children under age 14. Shreeve, 61, received a minimum 20 year prison term.

Owen Allred, who leads his brother Rulon's Apostolic United Brethren polygamist flock, one of the largest in the state, said radicals like the LeBarons and Shreeves give all fundamentalists a bad name.

"People lump us all together. We are law-abiding citizens who want to live our religion in peace," Mr. Allred said.



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